

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 113197
ORIGIN HA-05

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APPROVED BY HA/ORM:SCLOWMAN
EA:RA:FBENNETT (DRAFT)
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE
INFO USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 113197

FOR VP'S PARTY (HOLBROOKE/OAKLEY) AND EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, RTG

SUBJECT: REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN THAILAND

REF:

1. HENRY KAMM ARTICLE DATED APRIL 30 ASSERTS
THAT RTG HAS BEGUN ADMITTING CAMBODIANS WHO HAVE BEEN
EFFECTIVELY RESETTLED IN SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE TO KHLONG
YAI REFUGEE CAMP WITH AN ALLEGED TARGET OF AS MANY AS 8,000
JOINING THE PRESENT CAMP POPULATION OF 15,000.

2. IF TRUE, SUCH A MOVE REPRESENTS A SERIOUS STEP BACKWARD
IN OUR EFFORTS TO FIND A SOLUTION TO THE REFUGEE PROBLEM
THROUGH EFFECTIVE RESETTLEMENT OUTSIDE OF THE CAMPS FOR
THE REFUGEE POPULATION IN THAILAND.

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3. SUGGEST THAT VICE-PRESIDENT MAKE FOLLOWING POINT IF
EMBASSY CONCURS IN KAMM ASSESSMENT OF SITUATION:

-- WE HAVE ACHIEVED SOME DEGREE OF SUCCESS IN OUR EFFORTS
TO STIMULATE OFFERS OF RESETTLEMENT FROM THIRD COUNTRIES,

AS WELL AS MAINTAINING A U.S. ACCEPTANCE PROGRAM, IN THAT
APPROXIMATELY 100,000 REFUGEES WILL HAVE BEEN MOVED OUT OF

CAMPS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, PRIMARILY THAILAND, IN 1976, 1977
AND THROUGH 1978.

-- WE ARE DISMAYED TO FIND THAT IN RECENT WEEKS A NUMBER
OF CAMBODIANS WHO HAD ALREADY BEEN EFFECTIVELY RESETTLED
IN THAILAND ARE BEING ENCOURAGED TO RETURN TO CAMP LIFE.
SUCH A CLEAR REVERSAL OF OUR JOINT EFFORTS AT RESETTLEMENT
WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE. IT WOULD, FOR INSTANCE, NOT
ONLY BE IMPOSSIBLE TO TAKE INTO THE US PROGRAM REFUGEES
WHO HAVE ALREADY BEEN RESETTLED IN THAILAND BUT ALSO MAKE
IT QUITE DIFFICULT FOR THE UNITED STATES TO PROCESS ANY
REFUGEES FROM THESE CAMPS IF SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF THE
CAMPS' RESIDENTS HAD ALREADY BEEN EFFECTIVELY RESETTLED IN
THAILAND.

4. IF FACTS ARE CORRECT, PLEASE ALSO REQUEST UNHCR REP TO
REGISTER HIS STRONG OBJECTIONS. CHRISTOPHER

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